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Emergency Planning Project United States Border Patrol

A Baseline Assessment of Emergency Preparedness for the Processing Facility in [REDACTED]

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Executive Summary

The United States Border Patrol (USBP) was founded on May 28, 1924 as an agency within the United States Department of Labor. USBP became an agency within the Department of Homeland Security after the attacks on September 11, 2001. The USBP consist of over 120 stations within 20 sectors that span across the nation. The [REDACTED] Border Patrol Station located in the city of [REDACTED] has a number of emergency management issues associated with the processing facility.

Border Patrol Agent (BPA) Kyle Shifferly engaged in a project to review facility emergency planning and develop an overview about the current conditions of the facility with recommendations for methods of improvement. The project was coordinated as part of a graduate-level Emergency Planning course under the instruction of Dr. James Phelps. A consultation with [REDACTED], Patrol Agent In Charge, USBP, was conducted prior to beginning the assessment on the facility. The processing facility is located within the [REDACTED] Border Patrol Station located in [REDACTED] that is located on the northwest side of town. The facility is adjacent to the Rio Grande River and a railroad that imports/exports goods with Mexico.

This project identified areas of concern and makes recommendations for the improvement of facility safety and emergency management. Research was conducted utilizing descriptive and evaluative methodology. Reviews were conducted of existing emergency operations plans (EOPs). Integrated Rapid Visual Screening (IRVS) of the facility was conducted pursuant to FEMA and DoE guidelines. EOPs were developed for the facility to

facilitate an effective emergency management plan in the areas of safety and security for detainees and employees.

Coordinated efforts were made with [REDACTED], Special Operation Supervisor, to conduct evaluations that included onsite inspections, reviewing reports from law enforcement and fire responses, as well as, geographical information specific to nearby commercial or other associated threats that may affect the outcome of the plan. The descriptive and evaluative methodology was utilized and also included interviews, reviewing published reports and journal articles covering all aspects of law enforcement safety. Information was compiled utilizing the Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Plans and Integrated Rapid Visual Screening of Buildings. This guide is centered on five mission areas as defined in Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8. Those areas include Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery. The plan is attached in the appendix and is respectively noted as Appendix A: USBP Processing Facility Emergency Operations Plan. General recommendations for the facility are identified in the abstract with specific items being located at the end of the appendix.

Background and Significance

There are a number of significant events that have contributed to the evolution of emergency plans for law enforcement institutions. Among these are the well-known recent events associated with shootings, bombings and less well-known disasters resulting from infrastructure problems. These include:

- In June of 2013, 900 prisoners were evacuated from a state prison outside of Colorado Springs, CO. The prisoners were transported to other area prisons to

avoid the danger of heavy smoke. There were four separate wildfires in the vicinity of the prison that pressured state officials to evacuate prior the fires reaching the prison.

- On October 31, 2012, a train derailment near Louisville, KY led to a chemical release, a hazmat declaration and an emergency evacuation within a one mile radius of the accident. One of the railcars was leaking butadiene, a flammable, colorless gas with a mild aromatic odor. Emergency responders were able to contain the leaking butadiene with foam because water is ineffective against this material. Hydrochloride, sodium hydroxide, calcium carbide, and methyl isobutyl ketone were also aboard the train. The incident was declared a Level 3 HazMat situation, which is the highest alert level.
- On June 21, 2011, an inmate involved shooting occurred at the Fulton County Jail near Atlanta, GA. An inmate, Korte Hurt, shot another inmate in the hand over illegal drugs and cigarettes. A small handgun, no bigger than a cell phone, was found in the vicinity of the incident. It is still unknown how the firearm got inside the jail. The jail was placed on lockdown while non-essential employees and visitors were evacuated.
- On February 18, 2012, the FBI arrested Amine El Khalifi in connection with plotting to carry out a bombing attack against the Capitol building in Washington, DC. Khalifi was arrested just blocks away from the Capitol with a vest he believed contained explosives, but was actually inert material. The FBI come across Khalifi conveying his determination to carry out a terror attack against a synagogue or military instillation. The plan transformed over time to the Capitol

where he could "set off explosives where people would be around" (Alleged Suicide Bomber, 2012).

These events have prompted concern for the law enforcement agencies throughout America, with regard to general safety and emergency planning along with those incidents involving hazardous materials, fire and life safety, evacuation capabilities and emergency access.

General Recommendations

The results indicate that the facility has threat hazards and that there are areas for improvement. The recommendations for the [REDACTED] Border Patrol Station include the following:

- Adopting the proposed appendix identified herein as new and revised emergency operations plans.
- Updating evacuation maps to match new construction.
- Update and increase safety training for employees in areas of fire and life safety, active shooter scenarios and bomb threats.
- Install vehicle barricades on all generators and electrical lines around the facility. Existing fencing (where installed) is insufficient.
- Increase video surveillance throughout the facility, specifically with regard to external cameras around the perimeter of the station.
- Have all fire protection and life safety systems installed, maintained and inspected by state licensed professionals certified by the Texas Department of Insurance: State Fire Marshal's Office, and the Texas Department of Public Safety: Private Security Bureau.

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Appendix A: USBP Processing Facility Emergency Operations Plan

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